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ABSTRACT

Explanatory statements by acting executive director of the National Council on Indian Opportunity noted (1) that the council was formed to involve Indian people in Federal policy and the program-formulation process and (2) that principal functions of the NCIO were to encourage full use of Federal programs to benefit Indians, to encourage interagency coordination and cooperation, to appraise impact and progress of Federal programs, and to suggest ways to improve such programs. At the January 1970 meeting, Vice-president Agnew discussed the relationship and responsibilities of the Federal Government to the Indian people, cited problems to be focused upon, and directed each Cabinet member present to respond to recommendations made by the 6 Indian council members. Indian members of the NCIO presented recommendations on administration, education, health, welfare, urban environment, economic development, legal rights, agriculture, housing, and the Blue Lake religious sanctuary. The concluding statement by an Indian council member noted that the foremost need of all Indian people is a steady income-producing job, and methods were recommended for securing industries which would provide employment. (AN)

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REPORT

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON INDIAN OPPORTUNITY

Roosevelt Room
The White House
Washington, D. C.
January 26, 1970

National Council on Indian Opportunity
Office of the Vice President
Washington, D. C.

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"A reverence for nature is inherent in the culture of the American Indian. Just as deeply inherent in the culture that some of us, as much later arrivals, brought from our European homes were the ideals of liberty, equality, fraternity. We are now learning the importance of the Indians' respect for nature; they however have not yet benefited from the ideals supposedly ours: 'liberty and justice for all.' Indian people are still our most poverty-stricken Americans -- and it is outrageous that this should be so.

"It is my purpose and the purpose of this Council to attack that raw truth and to do so effectively within the term of this Administration."

Spiro T. Agnew
The Vice President
January 26, 1970

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REPORT

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON
INDIAN OPPORTUNITY
ROOSEVELT ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D. C.
January 26, 1970

Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, Chairman, presided at a full meeting of the National Council on Indian Opportunity held in the Roosevelt Room at the White House, January 26, 1970. The six Indian members of the Council along with their fellow members, Cabinet officers from seven departments, attended this important meeting.

Included in this report is the opening statement of the Vice President, following which he said, "The primary reason we are here today is to hear the statement of our fellow Indian members. It is only proper that this statement of recommendations be presented first so that the Federal members can respond to it, letting us know what their respective departments are doing and plan to do in this vital area of activity."

The complete text of the Indian members' statement, included in this report, contains numerous recommendations on a broad variety of problem areas of interest to Indian people throughout the country. The Vice President and Cabinet officials complimented the Indian members on the quality of their presentation.

The Vice President directed each Cabinet member of the Council to respond to the recommendations included in the Indian members' statement within thirty days.

As most of you are aware, the Council was created by Presidential Executive Order on March 6, 1968. Its membership consists of the Vice President as chairman, seven Cabinet officers (the Secretaries of Interior; Agriculture; Commerce; Labor; Health, Education, and Welfare; Housing and Urban Development; and the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity) plus six Indian members appointed by the President for two-year terms.

The Indian members currently serving on the Council are: Mr. Raymond Nakai, Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council; Mr. Roger Jourdain, Chairman of the Red Lake Chippewa Tribal Council; Mrs. LaDonna Harris, Comanche, from Oklahoma; Mr. William Hensley, Eskimo and member of the Alaska State Legislature; Mr. Wendell Chino, Chairman of the Mescalero Apache Tribal Council; and Mr. Cato Valandra, Rosebud Sioux Tribe of South Dakota.

The Council, formed to involve Indian people in the Federal policy and program formulation process, has four principal functions: (1) to encourage full use of Federal programs to benefit Indians; (2) to encourage interagency coordination and cooperation; (3) to appraise impact and progress of Federal programs; and (4) to suggest ways to improve such programs.

The Council exists to serve you, to involve you, the Indian people of America, wherever you may be -- on Federal reservations, or on state reservations; in rural areas, or in urban centers -- and we urge you to use NCIO and to help it do its job by providing us with your suggestions and criticisms.

You may expect to hear more from us in the coming months and years about actions and activities of interest to all Indian people.

On behalf of the Vice President, the Council members, and the staff, may I pledge to you our best efforts in the work and challenges that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

Robert Robertson
Acting Executive Director

STATEMENT BY THE VICE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON INDIAN OPPORTUNITY
ROOSEVELT ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE
JANUARY 26, 1970 - 2:30 P.M.

In his State of the Union Message last Thursday, the President said:

> "Our land, this land that is ours together, is a great and good land."

None of our citizens have known this truth more directly, or known it longer, than the first American.

They lived off the land, used the land, revered the land. Ground and water and sky were sacred. It has taken the rest of us one hundred years to learn what the Indians knew from the beginning. Now at last we do know it, and, as the President said:

> "Restoring nature to its natural state is a use beyond party and beyond factions... Clean air, clean water, open spaces -- these should once again be the birthright of every American."

A reverence for nature is inherent in the culture of the American Indian. Just as deeply inherent in the culture we as much later arrivals, brought from our European homes were the ideals of liberty, equality, fraternity. We are now learning the importance of the Indians' respect for nature; they however have not yet benefited from the ideals supposedly ours: "liberty and justice for all." Indian people are still our most poverty-stricken Americans -- and it is outrageous that this should be so.

It is my purpose and the purpose of this Council to attack that raw truth and to do so effectively within the term of this Administration.

In September of 1968 President Nixon set forth policies he would pursue to assist the American Indians to reach the goals they have set and will set. Basic to his program are three key principles:

I. The special relationship between the Federal government and the Indian people and the special responsibilities of the Federal government to the Indian people is acknowledged.

II. Rather than "termination," our policy objective is that the right of choice of the Indian people will be respected, and their participation in planning their own destiny will be encouraged.

III. Indian people will be fully consulted before programs under which they must live are planned.

As Special Consultant to the President, Leonard Garment wrote to an Indian spokesman last November.

"Officials must begin by listening to Indian voices speaking on their own terms... the process of listening must be begun on the local level... the Indians voices heard must... embrace... elected tribal officials, grass roots spokesmen, Indian organizations of all perspectives, urban Indians, Indian youth and those many other voices not heard before... the process must be as open as possible."

The National Council on Indian Opportunity provides the chance for Federal Cabinet officers to work directly with Indian leaders in:

-carrying our the policies of the President
-carrying out new policies developed in consultation with Indians
-encouraging full use of Federal programs by Indian people
-apprising the impact and progress of Federal programs for Indians
-suggesting ways to improve such programs

First of all, it is absolutely essential that each Cabinet member of the Council assures that his department has the necessary mechanisms and procedures which will provide the full and complete consultation with Indian people called for by the President. This should be done in cooperation with the Council.

The Indian members of the Council have met twice in preparation for the meeting today, and I should like to devote the

major portion of our session to considering their comments and recommendations. It is my understanding that among their recommendations will be one relating to the subject of consultation.

The President has also called for increasing the authority and responsibility of Indians over programs affecting them and has cited the following examples:

-Independent Indian school boards, funded at government expense for each government-run school.
-Tribes should be urged to take over reservation law.
-Road construction and repair activities should be under Indian management.
-School service contracts for running school busses or for operating a school lunch program, should be funded as they are now but should be an activity of the Indian people themselves rather than of the Federal government.

However, as I stated during my speech to the National Congress of American Indians in Albuquerque in October, 1969, while we urge greater local leadership. we will not force it nor use its immediate absence to deny assistance. The Indian people must have the right to accept or reject local control.

Members of the Council are of course aware of the problems of interest to American Indians. Indians suffer limitations, disabilities and indignities that few disadvantaged groups in America suffer in equal measure; their unemployment rate is ten times the national average; 95% of their housing is inadequate, etc. The Federal members of the Council must ensure that all appropriate employees of their departments are also fully aware and keenly sensitive to these facts.

Economic opportunity on Indian reservations offers special problems and on the other hand very special opportunities. In this area the President has once again set forth very clear guidelines for us to build from.

"The economic development of Indian reservations will be encouraged and the training of the Indian people for meaningful employment on and off the reservation will have high priority.

"My Administration will promote the economic development of the reservation by offering economic incentives to private industry to locate there and provide opportunities for Indian employment and training.

"The special development problems of smaller reservations will also be recognized, and the administrators of government loan programs will be encouraged to take businessmen's risks in sponsoring Indian enterprises."

Off the reservation, many Indians, some of them unwisely relocated by the Federal government, have not been successfully assimilated and find themselves confined to hopeless city reservations of despair because of lack of education and skills. I am advised that Indian center facilities are of particular assistance to Indians attempting to make the adjustment from life on the reservation to the complex environment of our urban areas. These centers offer Indians an opportunity to obtain information and guidance on how they can best utilize the public and private programs designed to assist them as well as providing a focal point of help from all interested parties. I want the appropriate departments to examine their various programs to assure that they are fully supporting such Indian centers and to make recommendations as to how they can be improved and additional ones established.

The Council has repeatedly received complaints that off-reservation Indians are denied assistance from Federally supported programs. The principal reason given for this denial is that since they are Indians, the Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for them and they are therefore not eligible to participate in the program in question. This, as we know, is incorrect; however, many persons in our regional and field offices apparently don't understand that fact and it is imperative that this situation be corrected. With several exceptions, the BIA's responsibility is limited to the Indian reservation. American Indians living off the reservation are as entitled as any other American citizen to participate in any and all Federally assisted programs. The Council's staff has prepared a suggested memorandum, to be found in your folder, which could be used in correcting this problem.

Programs designed to assist Indians encounter the same difficulties as other Federal programs: coordination problems, poor delivery systems and the lack of flexibility to meet varying circumstances.

First with respect to the problem of coordination. In 1957 the total Federal outlay for Indian programs was about $78 million, nearly all of which went to the Interior Department. Today our Federal expenditures for Indians total over $.5 billion with nearly half of this amount going to the six departments, other than Interior, represented at this table today.

This Council must provide the guidance for improved coordination and we must take advantage of the opportunities provided by the new regional offices and the Regional Councils of the Departments of Labor; Health, Education, and Welfare; Housing and Urban Development, and the Office of Economic Opportunity. I have requested the Bureau of the Budget to examine how the eleven BIA area offices may better coordinate their activities with those of other departments in the new regional offices. Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget, Dwight Ink, will make report on the progress being made in that area.

The President has stated that we are to eliminate needless bureaucratic levels which insulate decision making from the Indian people. This directive goes hand in hand with our efforts for expanded consultation with an involvement of Indians and with the President's desire to decentralize decision making authority. Secretary Hickel may desire to specifically comment on this aspect especially in view of the realignment of the BIA.

The diversity of the characteristics of 290 Indian reservations also requires special approaches to the critical needs of education, health and housing. I understand that in New Mexico the Pueblo Indians want to build their homes of adobe and other indigenous materials, yet our Federal programs require them to use other types of material in order to qualify for Federal assistance.

The number one disease among Indians is now <u>otitis media</u> (middle ear disease). Its inadequate treatment results in loss or impairment of hearing and it is most prevalent among young children--63% of reported cases being among children five years of age. However, we have no discrete program for its prevention and treatment, and research in this area is to be discontinued.

The members of the Havasupai Tribe at the bottom of the Grand Canyon rank among their most urgent needs a third and fourth grade so their children will not be required to leave home at the age of 8. Right now their children are among the 9,000 Indian children under nine years of age who are at boarding schools living away from their parents.

These comments are not meant as criticisms of the respective departments but only as illustrations of our need to constantly re-examine our programs in terms of the particular needs of Indian people.

The Council meeting today offers the opportunity to focus on these problems, take inventory of our accomplishments and our

failures and plan for a better day for the American Indian. I should now like to have brief reports from the Federal members of the Council and then turn to the Indian members for their comments and recommendations.

STATEMENT OF THE INDIAN MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON INDIAN OPPORTUNITY TO THE CHAIRMAN AND FEDERAL MEMBERS

JANUARY 26, 1970

- In 1970, when men have landed on the moon, many American Indians still do not have adequate roads to the nearest market.

- In 1970, when almost every American baby can look forward to a life expectancy of 70 years, the Indian infant mortality rate is three times higher than the national average after the first month of life.

- In 1970, when personal income in America is at an unprecedented level, unemployment among American Indians runs as high as 60%.

These are reasons why the National Council on Indian Opportunity--the first agency of the Federal Government where Indian leaders sit as equals with members of the President's Cabinet in overseeing Federal Indian programs and in recommending Federal Indian policy--is of the most vital importance to Indians all across the Nation. Because the essential requirement of any Indian policy must be active and prior Indian consultation and input before major decisions are taken which affect Indian lives, Indian membership on the Council is not only of symbolic importance, but is insurance that such consultation will be sought.

We wonder if the Vice President and the Cabinet Officers fully appreciate the fact of their physical presence here today--the meaning that is has for Indian people? We realize that every group in America would like to have you arrayed before them, commanding your attention.

For the Indian people across the nation to know that at this moment the Vice President and Cabinet Officers are sitting in a working session with Indian leaders is to alleviate some of the cynicism and despair rife among them.

Thus, the Council and the visibility of its Federal members is of great symbolic importance to the Indian people. However, symbolism is not enough. We must be able to report that we have come away from this meeting with commitments on the part of the Federal members that Indian people and their problems will be considered even out of proportion to their numbers or policical impact. Otherwise the

distrust, the suspicion on the part of the Indians, which has dogged the Federal Government and has defeated most of its attempts to help the Indian people, will continue.

The National Council has a concern with the well-being of all Indians everywhere--whether they live on the reservations or off; in cities or rural areas; on Federal Indian Reservations or on those established by particular states.

Indian Tribes on Federal reservations have had a very long relationship with the Federal Government. However, in the last decade and a half, longstanding latent suspicion and fear brought about by broken promises, humiliation, and defeat have sharpened into an almost pyschological dread of the termination of Federal responsibility. This fear permeates every negotiation, every meeting, every encounter with Indian tribes. Whether this fear can be overcome is debatable, but Federal agencies--especially those represented on this Council--must understand it and be aware of its strangling implications.

Co-existent with this attitude, criticism of the Bureau of Indian Affairs by the Indian people has begun to rise. The criticism has two aspects,the latter of which seems to contradict the opposition to termination.

First, a growing awareness among Indians of how far they have been left behind in achieving the American dream and rising expectations have led to the realization that Bureau services have been grossly inadequate.

Second, a quest for self-determination and control over their own destiny has led to criticism of the paternalistic attitude with which these services have been given in the past. The Indian people are aware that this approach has led to a sense of over-dependency on the Bureau and want to overcome this without losing their special relationship with the Bureau.

In short, the Indian people want more services, more self-determination and relief from the hovering spectre of termination.

The Indian problem has been studied and re-studied, stated and re-stated. There is little need for more study. In 1970, the Indians are entitled to some action, some programs, and some results. To that end we are setting forth a series of specific goals. These goals can and must be met. Such positive federal action will create Indian confidence in the sincerity and capability of the Federal Government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ADMINISTRATION

Special Assistant to the Secretary

In order to insure parity of opportunity for Indians in all Federal programs, we recommend that a position in the immediate office of each Departmental Secretary be established--which hopefully can be filled by an Indian. He will deal with policy and planning for Indian programs at the central, regional, and local levels; assure Indian input into legislative proposals, policy formulation, and program planning; and report accomplishments on a quarterly basis to the National Council on Indian Opportunity.

Indian Desks

We recommend that departments establish Indian desks at the program level.

Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

We recommend, that the Bureau of Indian Affairs have its own Assistant Secretary of the Interior, or that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs be given Assistant Secretary status.

Budget

Because no one person knows or is in a position to know what the various federal departments are planning for Indian expenditures, we have advised the Executive Director of the National Council to assign a staff member to acquaint himself with the Indian component in the budget proposals of the several departments and to follow the budget planning process through all decision-making levels in the Bureau of the Budget up to, but not including, the final director's review.

National Council Field Offices

To insure that the coordinative, evaluative and innovative responsibilities given to the National Council by the President are carried out; to maximize delivery of programs at the lowest local level; and to receive recommendations regarding policy and programs from local tribes, Indian organizations and individuals, we submit that Council field offices composed of a Director, Assistant Director, and Administrative Assistant are essential and must be established in each of the ten Human Resource Regions.

Demonstration Projects

In order to show that the Government is sincere in its commitments, and to assure greater opportunities available to Indians, we suggest that a demonstration project representing all services available to Indians in each department, be established in order that Indians may observe them and utilize them in their own communities.

BIA In-Service Training

We recommend that the Bureau of Indian Affairs effect as quickly as possible comprehensive in-service training programs to (1) expose all of its employees to the cultural heritages and the value systems of the Indian people they serve and (2) to increase and guarantee the upward mobility of its Indian employees.

Evaluation of BIA Staffing

We recommend that the administrative structure of the BIA be analyzed to determine areas of over-staffing and duplication - with a view toward elimination of "dead wood."

Indian Service on Federal Committees

We recommend that there be equal opportunity for Indians to serve on all appropriate Federal boards, councils, commissions, etc., (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity, the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, the Civil Rights Commission, etc.)

Indian Youth

The Indian members of the Council recognize the value of having the input of young Indians at policy making levels and in the operation of programs. We recommend that each department give specific attention to the establishment of a federal intern program for young Indians at the local, regional and national levels.

EDUCATION

It is an appalling fact that between 50 and 60% of all Indian children drop out of school. In some areas the figure is as high as 75%. This stands in sharp contrast to the national average of 23%. The suicide rate among all young Indians is over three times the national average. Estimates place it at five to seven times the national average for boarding school students.

A full generation of Indian adults have been severely damaged by an unresponsive and destructive educational system. At a time when economic survival in society requires increasing comprehension of both general knowledge and technical skills, Indians are lost at the lowest level of achievement of any group within our society. We must not lose this generation of Indian children as well. There is a desparate need for both a massive infusion of funds and complete restructuring of basic educational concepts. Therefore, the Indian members of this Council strongly recommend the following major policy initiatives:

1. That a COMPREHENSIVE INDIAN EDUCATION ACT be submitted to Congress to meet the special education needs of Indians in both Federal and public schools in an effective and coordinated manner. This act will pull together all Indian education programs including set-aside programs. Provision would be made for Indian input, contracting authority with tribes and communities, submission of plans, accountability and evaluation procedures in the hope of correcting the glaring inadequacies and misdirections that exist in present programs such as the Johnson-O'Malley Act. The Indian members of this Council wish to express our strong support for the HEW appropriation bill. In particular, we want to make it known that a number of public schools with large percentages of Indian students will be forced to close if this bill is vetoed and the impacted aid funds are thereby imperiled.

2. That the Civil Rights Enforcement Office of HEW investigate discrimination against Indians in schools receiving federal funds.

3. That a permanent Indian education subcommittee be established in each house of the Congress.

4. That funding for Indian education be substantially increased. Funds at present are not adequate for even basic rudimentary requirements such as reasonable teacher-student and dormitory counselor-student ratios. It is a fact today that the average student-counselor ratio in BIA boarding schools is one to 60 during the day and one to 150 at night. Innovative program planning and implementation cannot be successfully carried out without the support of basic operational facilities and staff.

5. That the present reorganization of the BIA assign to the assistant commissioner for education the responsibilities of a superintendent of federal schools, having direct line control over the operation of the schools, including budgets, personnel systems and supporting services.

6. That the Bilingual Education Act receive sufficient funding so that an expanded program would be available for Indian and Eskimo children, including those at schools operated for Indians by nonprofit institutions, and that the BIA undertake an expanded bilingual program of its own. This program can and should include the hiring of a greatly increased number of Indian teacher aides.

7. That courses in Indian languages, history and culture be established in all Indian schools including those slated for transfer to state control, and that a revision of textbooks be undertaken to make them relevant to an Indian child's experience and to eliminate derogatory references to his heritage.

8. That phasing out of BIA boarding schools become a policy goal. At present approximately 40,000 Indian children attend BIA boarding schools; 9,000 of these children are nine years of age or under. Additional students are housed in BIA bordertown dormitories while they attend off-reservation public schools. These children are often sent several hundred miles from home (in case of Alaskan children thousands of miles) due to the lack of facilities in their area. The schools which they attend are often emotionally disturbing and culturally destructive to some children and their families and are educationally deficient as well. In order to eliminate boarding schools, roads must be constructed in rural areas; without sufficient road appropriations there cannot be realistic access to schools for these children on a daily attendance basis. A plan must be developed for the construction of a vast network of community schools and the present allocation of money for construction at existing boarding schools must be reallocated to the construction of community based schools.

9. That tribal control of schools with the continuation of federal funding be implemented upon the request of Indian communities. In conjunction with this, a report should be submitted by the BIA on the progress that has been made in the establishment of local Indian school boards and the powers which have been granted to these boards. The time has come for an end to the solely advisory role that has been played by the majority of these boards. The OEO-BIA joint experiment at the Rough Rock School on the Navajo Reservation has

shown that Indian control is both a feasible and desirable means of operation. Community located and controlled schools could also serve as adult education centers and would help to acquaint Indian parents with the importance of their involvement in the education of their children in a setting with which they can identify.

10. That training programs in Indian cultures and value systems be provided to teachers, administrators and dormitory counselors - be they Anglo or Indian. There is no excuse for a quiet, shy Indian child being labeled and treated as dumb and unresponsive by an uncomprehending teacher.

11. That the need for a far greater number of Indian teachers must be recognized. At present, there are far too few Indians graduating from college to meet this need. Increased availability of scholarships to Indian students would enable a greater number to attend institutions of higher education. We support the establishment of a national scholarship clearinghouse for Indian students which would include the contracting of the BIA scholarship program. In order to obtain the highest quality teachers we recommend the elimination of the Civil Service regulation that protects by tenure incompetent and prejudiced teachers from dismissal.

12. That Federal funds be provided for the establishment of tribal community colleges.

13. That, recognizing the first five years of life as being of great importance in proper child development, there be an expansion of HEADSTART and kindergarten programs for Indian schools rather than a reduction. We also stress the necessity for a continuous process of Indian input into their organization and operation.

14. That modern educational communication techniques be utilized to enhance the educational opportunities for all Indian people.

HEALTH

It is a recognized fact that despite considerable improvement the health status of the American Indian is far below that of the general population of the United States. Indian infant mortality after the first month of life is three times the national average. This means, in plain language, that children are dying needlessly. The average life span of Indians is 44 years, one-third short of the national average

of 64 years; in Alaska it is only 36 years. In light of the dire need for all health facilities and health needs, it is criminal to impose a personnel and budget freeze on Indian health programs. Even without a freeze, Indian hospitals are woefully understaffed and under supplied, even to the extent of lacking basic equipment and medicine. We deplore the budget decisions that have caused this state of inadequacy.

There are a number of specific actions that can be taken now to improve Indian health services:

1. An Indian health aide program has been established. A review should be undertaken of its recruitment, training and assignment policies.

2. The Division of Indian Health and the regular U. S. Public Health Service should establish communication for ascertaining their respective areas of responsibility. There is no excuse for the plight of a sick individual, who also happens to be Indian, to be denied access to health facilities due to jurisdictional conflicts.

3. The establishment of Indian advisory boards at hospitals should be continued and expanded. However, to be meaningful, these boards must be given actual authority in the administrative areas of patient care.

4. The establishment of a program to bring Indian health services into communities rather than simply at the central office location, e.g., traveling clinics.

5. Lastly, the Council goes on record in support of a national health insurance system.

WELFARE

President Nixon's proposal for a Family Assistance Program is a major step toward restoring dignity to the individuals involved. We support the concept of this program and urge its enactment and adequate funding. We also request Indian input into its planning and delivery, for without a mutual exchange this new, innovative program will not satisfy the unique needs of the Indian people.

We specifically recommend today the following:

1. That an immediate investigation be undertaken of the system whereby many welfare recipients are exploited by trading post and grocery store owners. These trading post and grocery stores are the mailing address for large numbers of Indian welfare recipients in the surrounding areas. By isolated location, over-charging and credit, and the custom of dependency, the traders and store owners have complete control over the disbursement of the welfare checks;

2. That training programs in the culture and value systems of the Indian populations be required for social workers serving Indian people;

3. That Indian tribes be given the option of contracting with the Federal government for the administration of their own welfare programs.

URBAN

A National Council on Indian Opportunity study conducted in 1968-69 has found that one-half of the Indian population in the United States is located in urban areas. Yet none of the programs of the Federal government are aimed with any meaningful impact on the special problems which Indians in these urban environments face.

A majority of the urban Indians have arrived at their present location through the Federal government's relocation program. This program is seriously deficient in funds and in professional direction for economic, social and psychological adjustment to an environment that is almost totally strange, impersonal and alien. Aside from budgetary considerations, this raises the fundamental question of whether relocation is a proper policy or goal. In the study group's hearings, those Indians who testified expressed deep hostility for the program, its administrators, and its fallacious inducements. After serious analysis based on the hearings, the Indian Council members have concluded that viable economic development on or near present Indian communities is a goal much preferable to the artificial movement of individuals or families.

Immediate action must be taken to re-evaluate the entire jurisdiction of this relocation policy. In addition, the needed services for these people presently situated in these urban societies must be created and it is therefore recommended that the following actions be taken:

1. The Departments of Commerce, HEW, HUD, and OEO must educate themselves to the location of urban Indian concentrations with the purpose of bringing their present services directly and effectively into these areas. In addition, they must develop new programs and initiatives to answer the special needs of Indians in an urban environment.

2. Reinforcement of existing urban Indian centers and active support for the development of new centers located in neighborhood Indian areas which would serve the two-fold purpose of community centers and programmatic referral agencies.

3. Establishment of legal aid offices in Indian ghetto areas.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Indian people in general have been deprived of the opportunity of obtaining business acumen and have not participated in the benefits of the American free enterprise system. This fact has led to the present economic plight of the first Americans and has been an embarrassment to principles upon which this country was founded. But in recent years, because of a cooperative effort involving government agencies and of the private groups industrial development on Indian reservations is starting to become a reality. This development is greatly desired by most tribes to improve the economics of the communities and to provide jobs for the individuals of those communities.

However, where large industries have located in Indian communities, the inadequacies of the reservation to accommodate the sudden concentration of employee populations have created serious problems. In most of these new industrial communities there are inadequate schools, too few houses, insufficient hospital and medical capability and generally inadequate community facilities for the population. While Indians desire and deserve job opportunities near their homes, most of the industries thus far attracted to reservations have chiefly employed women. This leaves the male head of the family still unemployed and disrupts the family. Attention of those federal agencies concerned with industrial development should be directed to this problem and they should maximize employment for Indian men.

Most of the industries which locate in Indian country are subsidized by the government because they are to provide jobs for Indians. The government should make employment of a high percentage of Indians a condition of the federal subsidy to ensure increased Indian employment.

High on the list of impediments to industrialization on Indian reservations is the lack of hard surfaced roads. Roads will have to be developed to handle the traffic of the work force and to provide a way to market goods produced and to procure necessary supplies.

A curious ruling of the Federal Aviation Agency is that Indian tribes are not public bodies. The legislation authorizing federal assistance in construction of airports limits that assistance to public bodies thereby excluding Indian tribes who wish to construct airports.

Finally, we wish to go on record supporting proposed legislation which would provide tax incentives to industry locating on Indian reservations. An exemption of industry from federal taxation for a period of years would provide much needed inducement to industry to come to Indian reservations. With regard to helping individual Indians into business for themselves, programs providing the necessary capital through loans at low interest rates and continuing technical assistance are essential to success.

Work must be done to create a climate and receptivity among Indian individuals to go into business and there must be a sustained vehicle to accomplish this if Indians are to overcome their lack of experience in business management. To complement this effort there is a need for developing a greater number of business opportunities. A program of sustained management and technical assistance as well as adequate financing is needed. A talent search is needed to locate and identify the potential Indian entrepreneur.

Therefore we recommend:

1. That there be developed a program of a 100% secured loan program for five years for Indians.

2. That there be attempts with the American Bankers Association with federal program linkage to develop training to familiarize bankers with special and unique needs of the Indian communities and to involve selected Indians in banking training programs.

3. That a consumer education program be developed and implemented for all Indians.

4. That an Indian program to establish Indian credit unions and to implement credit union management training for Indians be organized and funded.

LEGAL

Independent Indian Legal Agency

Government lawyers in the Interior and Justice Departments handling Indian legal rights are caught in a conflict because they also represent government agencies in litigation affecting Indian rights. In many cases government lawyers have failed to pursue untested legal claims of the tribes that would yield substantial water rights.

Because of this conflict, we recommend the establishment of an agency independent from both the Interior and Justice Departments to represent the tribes in all legal services required in connection with all Indian rights to lands, water, and natural resources.

Jurisdiction

At the present time Indian tribal courts do not have jurisdiction over non-Indian offenders on their reservations. In order to adequately control and develop these reservations, such jurisdiction must be extended to them where such an extension is desired by the tribes. Further research and study of this problem is needed. A further report suggesting how this study might be conducted will be forthcoming from the National Council on Indian Opportunity to the Interior and Justice Departments.

Alaska Native Land Rights

The enactment by Congress, in its current session, of legislation for the equitable settlement of the land rights of the Natives of Alaska -- the Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts -- is of highest priority. Justice requires that the settlement embrace the proposals set forth by the Alaska Federation of Natives which contemplates:

1. That fee simple title be confirmed in the Alaska Natives to a fair part of their ancestral lands.

2. That just compensation for the lands taken from the Natives include not only cash but also a continuing royalty share in the revenues derived from the resources of such lands.

We urge that the several departments of the government, and in particular the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture, and the Bureau of the Budget, reassess their position and give their full support to the proposal of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

AGRICULTURE

Indian members of the National Council on Indian Opportunity strongly urge the Farmers Home Administration to reemphasize its efforts to make economic opportunity and low-income housing loans available to Indians in rural areas. This effort can be aided a great deal by employing Indians as field workers in areas with high Indian concentration. FHA should work closely with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to find a way to adjust its security requirements to the unique Indian situation. This will ensure that more loans will be made to Indians residing on trust land.

We commend the Extension Service for providing 60 professional extension workers in 17 states and 90 Indian aides on reservations and in Indian communities to explain and demonstrate nutrition programs and better use of resources to attain a better quality of living. (Expanded assistance to urban Indians should be emphasized in the future.) Plans should proceed for conducting seminars and short courses for Indians on household management, budgeting and credit, and improved methods of breeding, feeding, and marketing of livestock.

The Farmer Cooperative Service assistance to Alaskan Native cooperatives and Indian cooperatives in Oklahoma has been very useful. We request that this service actively seek out opportunities for the use of cooperatives among Indian farmers and provide the technical assistance to keep the cooperatives afloat.

The Soil Conservation Service can provide an important service for Indians because land is their most valuable remaining resource. Wherever the Soil Conservation Service can cooperate with the Interior Department in preserving Indian land from erosion and flood it should actively offer to do so. Interior Department resources for soil and water conservation do not appear to be adequate to meet the total Indian need.

The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service also provides an important service in encouraging soil and water conservation practices. This technical assistance should be made available to all Indian farmers. The federal payments for wool produced and marketed by Indians, especially in Arizona and New Mexico, is a beneficial program and efforts should be made to assure that all Indians eligible for these payments are made aware of the program.

The Donation Feed Program in Agriculture had no authority to purchase hay for starving Papago cattle in 1968, and as a result the tribal herd was devastated. If the weakened cattle has been able to consume Departmentally owned feed grain they would have been saved. The Department should not allow such a disaster to be repeated.

The Department of Agriculture has several other programs which can assist Indian progress. Without going into detail, the Consumer and Marketing Service, the Economic Research Service, Agricultural Research Service, Rural Electrification Administration, Food and Nutrition Service, and the Forest Service are useful to Indians, but special efforts should be made to improve the availability of services to Indians.

HOUSING

Housing among American Indians and Eskimos is deplorable. It is worse than that found in Appalachia or any slum. That this situation should exist in America in 1970, when many Americans are becoming two-home owner families, is a cruel paradox. Immediate action must be given by Federal departments to relieve this blight.

Even though some small breakthrough has been made in Indian housing, the need remaining is tremendous. There needs to be a review of financing to provide increased Indian participation in all housing programs. During the past year a tri-agency agreement involving the Departments of Interior, HEW, and HUD was effected to provide for coordination of expanded housing and expanded Indian water and sanitation facilities programs. This represents an effort to seek a better way of dealing with difficult problems by a joint effort. However, these efforts need to be reviewed to increase production and emphasis and to maintain action.

We recommend, in order to put the Indian housing problem into clearer focus, that regional conferences be held with a cross-section of

Indian representatives and appropriate Federal regional administrators, to determine what can practially and effectively be done with support of tribes and Indian organizations. These conferences should touch on the following needs:

-greater flexibility in determining types of housing programs appropriate to a situation.
-a review of the effectiveness and status of housing authorities.
-in cooperation with lending agencies, an analysis of the default rate and the causes for it.

We also point out that a solution to the Indian housing problem will help to solve corollary problems -- family instability, health and sanitation problems, poor school attendance or even dropouts, juvenile delinquency, and others.

BLUE LAKE

For more than 60 years the Taos Pueblo Indians have been seeking - by peaceful and legal means - the return of their religious sanctuary - Blue Lake. Because the problem is unique and because it has persisted over so many decades, we feel that the Taos struggle merits the special attention of the Council.

In 1965 the Indian Claims Commission ruled that the Blue Lake areasand an additional 130,000 acres were seized illegally. However, the Taos Indians are seeking the return of only the area containing the ancient shrine and holy places of their religion.

Once again, a bill introduced in Congress which would right this injustice has passed the House of Representatives and is pending in the Senate. We recommend that the full Council support this legislation and hope that Council members, individually will support the Taos Pueblo at every opportunity.

January 26, 1970

Mr. Vice President, Members of the Cabinet, Members of the National Council on Indian Opportunity, and Guests:

We have had presented this afternoon a rather lengthy recitation of the ills that beset the American Indian. You will appreciate that the needs of the Indian people are quite extensive but you must also appreciate that they do not have universal application to all Indian tribes everywhere.

On behalf of the Navajo Indian, I feel that there must be a more specific treatment of his problem, and in making this presentation, I realize that it may have specific application to other Indian tribes as well as the Navajo Tribe.

The foremost need of all Indian people is a steady, income-producing job. For without this, the Indian is forced to live on a day-to-day basis with no economic security whatever. You are all aware, however, that mass employment is possible chiefly through the acquisition of industry. You are also aware that industry is firecely sought by every city, town, and hamlet through the United States.

For the past six years, the Navajo has turned his attention assiduously to securing industry, and, to a measure, has been successful. But, these industries are all too few to take up the slack of the unemployed Navajo who number some 35,000 of a total population of some 140,000.

The Navajo, however, has been able to dispel the time-worn idea that the American Indian is a drunk and incapable of providing continuous and steady employment. By reason of the work of the Navajo, there are now some 22 industries actually seeking to locate on the Navajo Reservation. We would, of course, like to be able to furnish the facilities for all of these industries, but our limited economic resources preclude this.

As you know, industries, in the main, will locate in a particular area only if the facilities are built by the community seeking them and leased on favorable terms.

How then, can Indian people secure industries in this competitve labor market? Specifically, I would suggest that the Cabinet seriously consider asking Congress to set aside an industrial fund for the use of Indian Tribes. I would further suggest that an initial sum of $100 million be appropriated for this purpose. But, let me hasten to explain that this is not a "handout." Rather, the money would be loaned to the particular Tribe at a favorable rate of interest. The Tribe would then lease the facility and pay over the lease rental directly to the Federal agency involved. In this way, the industrial fund would remain intact and would be available for additional use as the need might arise.

I am certain that this would alleviate a great deal of unemployment among the American Indian and it would be a good business proposition for the Federal Government.

I realize that this would not cure the several ills, as so ably set forward in the paper we have received from the National Council on Indian Opportunity, but it would be a giant step in that direction. Given steady employment security, we would then focus on other problems facing the American Indian and perhaps solve these as well. For, with industrial well-being, I am certain that we would be able to find the means for better roads, houses, schools, hospitals, and other needed services.

I want to thank you for the opportunity of appearing before you today and presenting this statement.

Raymond Nakai
Chairman, Navajo Tribe